1:Williams E,G-5 (1923-1925) 1930
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The Name 'Orokaiva'

101 There has always been some mystery as to the meaning of 'Orokaiva'. By now, however, the name has established itself in the Territory, and appears more suitable than any other. W. N. Beaver wrote:[1]

'. . . we are at a loss to find a generic term to describe all that group of tribes who are considered to belong to one stock and who speak affiliated languages. It seems to me cumbersome to be continually referring to geographical boundaries or to places which are less than mere names to most people, and consequently I have been in the habit of using "Orokaiva" as a general term. . . . I would welcome a more correct general term, could one be found.'

It is doubtful whether any more correct general term could be found. It is common experience that a very large group of primitive people will have no distinctive name for itself. Among the people we are about to discuss both clan and tribal names are definite enough; but when we seek one generic name for all the tribes we must not expect to find it actually in use among them. Small differences of custom and the friendships and enmities of his own immediate group with its neighbours bulk large in the eyes of a native. It may be only the outsider who sees those comprehensive similarities which join all the tribes in one people. With regard to the Orokaiva, a more than usually quarrelsome and disunited people, it may be fair to assume that they never possessed that sense of unity which would necessitate or justify a common name. One thing at least is quite certain, that they did not themselves use the name Orokaiva. This, however, is by no means a disqualification, and we may conclude that the name has come to stay.

An alternative in common use is the rather clumsy phrase 'Binandele-speaking'. This is justified by the fact that all the tribal groups speak kindred dialects, the best known of which is that of the Binandele tribe in the north of the Division. The name 'Binandele' alone is sometimes applied to the whole people, and so again is the name 'Mambare'—because the Mambare river happens to be the home of the Binandele proper. But neither of these latter names should

[1] *Annual Report*, 1918–19, pp. 96, 97.

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be retained. A southern Orokaiva would be indignant to hear himself described as Binandele or Mambare.

When Sir William MacGregor ascended the river Mambare in March 1894 he was greeted with cries of *Orokaiva!* from those who wished to be friendly. 'On the Mambare', he wrote, 'the password is "orokaiva", which seems to mean "man of peace". It, at all events, puts one on a friendly footing.'[1] Then apparently, as now, the native of the north was given to vociferous welcoming of his friends. Nowadays, when a party of travellers enters a village, men, women, and children will send up an irregular chorus of cries which may be almost deafening and disconcerting to a European, though it fails entirely to affect the *sangfroid* of a well-bred Papuan. Strangely enough the cry of *Orokaiva!* is heard now comparatively seldom. It has been supplanted by *Oro, oro!* which will be heard in almost every village.

It appears, however, that *Orokaiva!* was never the universal cry of the whole people. Different tribes had their distinctive cries of welcome. Among the Binandele it was commonly *Tepo Tepo!* which, as the word means 'empty' or in pidgin English 'for nothing', may be taken as a cry of reassurance from the villagers to their visitors. The conventional cry of the Aiga was *Javau javau!* with the second syllable of the word prolonged into a cacophonous shriek. Those who used it could give no interpretation of this startling mode of salutation. The 'Salt Water' People sometimes used the cries *Pesau!* and *Sawesau!* I am told that at Bakumbari on the coast, for instance, visitors from the north would be hailed with *Pesau!* and those from the south with *Sawesau!* and it was suggested that the former was the name of a certain fish, and that the latter meant 'swimmers', though in neither case was the appositeness of the words made at all clear. It is plain then that, prior to the coming of the whites, *Orokaiva!* was not universally used by the Binandele-speaking peoples.

The fact appears to be that the first explorers who penetrated the Mambare heard this cry, which they interpreted as one of peace or welcome, and accordingly took up as a

[1] *Annual Report*, 1893–4, p. 53.

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useful password. It is evident that they used it in prosecuting their explorations in parts where the cry was not even known, for an old man of the Aiga tribe told how on the first coming of the whites to his village they had entered shouting *Orokaiva, orokaiva!* and he, then a youngster, not knowing what they meant, had joined with the others in answering *Evari peka!* 'Sleep in peace!' To be short, however, the characteristic cry used by some of the people has been adopted as a name for all of them. Even now, it is true, a native of the north may refuse to acknowledge the appelation, and I know a diminutive armed constable who threatened assault on a Kiwai corporal solely because the latter had referred to him as an Orokaiva. But none of this need deter us from using what is a useful and happily chosen name.

The actual meaning of the word remains in doubt, though it is interesting to note that in modern speech it stands for native tobacco. Here again, however, a similar difficulty arises: is the name anterior to the coming of the whites, as some informants have maintained it is; or is it a comparatively modern transference of a name from the people to one of their distinctive possessions, viz. the inferior kind of tobacco? It may be worth adding that *oro* means 'men's house', and *kaiva*, a mysterious word, is the name of one of the principal kinds of taro.

Ethnic Neighbours

The ethnic neighbours of the Orokaiva may be briefly enumerated. (1) On the sea coast immediately to the south are a branch of the Okeina[1] who are in every respect closely akin to them. Beyond these are the Baruga people of the Bariji river who speak a different language and are culturally distinct, though generally similar in appearance. (2) In the Hydrographer Range and on the southern slopes of Mount Lamington are found the group of peoples commonly named 'Managalasi'. Between these and the Orokaiva the distinction is immediately apparent, not only in culture but also in physique. The Managalasi are as a rule lighter in

[1] Another group of this people occurs near Cape Nelson, North-Eastern Division.

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colour, shorter in stature, and somewhat sturdier in build. They have not the lean and well-marked features of the plainsmen, but broad faces on which their more vivacious temperament shows itself in broad smiles. (3) At its south-western corner the territory of the Orokaiva abuts upon that of the Biagi peoples. These are typical mountaineers of the Koiari type, with whom Capt. Barton strikingly compared the plainsmen, as 'dark-skinned, lanky, naked people, with their hair worn in long tags, in marked contrast to the stalwart, be-petticoated, light-skinned mountaineers'.[1] They have not been examined with any great thoroughness hitherto. (4) Along the western flank the Orokaiva plain is bounded by a wide belt of uninhabited mountains separating the Yodda valley from the plain. It would hardly be right to speak of the Chirima people (i.e. those who inhabit the valley of the Chirima, the second great affluent of the Mambare) as neighbours of the Orokaiva, because prior to the penetration of the Chirima valley by Europeans there was apparently no existing contact between the two peoples. (5) On the north-west, inhabiting the Upper Waria, are the group of peoples whom Chinnery and Beaver called Tahari. Except for a branch which has extended to the Upper Gira, it might be said that they also were virtually out of contact with the Orokaiva. (6) Along the lower reaches of the river Waria are a number of tribes, Mawai, Yarawi, and Jia, who bear some resemblance to the people with whom we are concerned in physique, culture, and language. Contact with these, friendly or warlike, has evidently been fairly close before as well as since the coming of the white man. With them we may class the Yema who are found on the middle Gira and the Eia. These latter, however, are becoming merged in the Binandele population.

Tribes and Cultural Differences

The Orokaiva are divided into a number of large tribes which may be named at this point. The classification rests mainly on a basis of language and follows, with a little amplification, the list made by Chinnery and Beaver. It must

[1] *Annual Report*, 1904–5, p. 7.

2: Williams E, G-5 (1923-1925) 1928
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by the sudden and somewhat revolutionary change which gives rise to what we might call a new cult. These two types of change present a striking analogy to the two kinds of change in biological evolution—the minute variation on the one hand and the mutation on the other. (Indeed, to carry the analogy further, we might say that popular favour exercised a sort of natural selection.) In biology the importance of mutations has of late been recognized. It is suggested here (without being indebted to the analogy except for the use of the term) that a theory of *cultural* mutations might be added to our theories of the growth of civilization. I suggested in the introductory section (not without an appeal to authority) that native culture did not possess that degree of stability or immobility which anthropology has usually taken for granted. The evidence of *Baigona*, of Taro, and of the variant cults seems to demand that we make allowance for swift and important changes—important both because of the greatness of the change in custom and because of the great numbers of people whom it may effect.

It is of the first significance to remember that the Taro cult has sprung up, flourished, and put forth its various new branches among one and the same people—the Orokaiva. If we conclude that Taro is at all indebted to its precursor *Baigona*, we would have to admit that to this extent it is an importation. But there is no question that Taro as a cult, which is to all intents and purposes a new one, came into being among the Orokaiva, and that the variant cults which have been mentioned in the course of the report likewise came into being among the Orokaiva.

Now this people, occupying almost the whole of the Northern Division of Papua, is strikingly homogeneous, not only in physique but also in language and culture. The differences between the several dialects of 'Binandele', puzzling as they are to a European, do very little to hinder the freest intercourse and conversation between members of the various tribes. As for their culture, one

3: Reay E-4, 5 (1951) 1953 OJ23 Orokaiva OJ23

SOCIAL CONTROL AMONGST THE OROKAIVA

By Marie Reay

Introduction

"Orokaiva" is a general term denoting people speaking Binandele and related dialects who occupy a large part of the Northern Division of Papua. Orokaiva society was investigated in some detail in the 1920's by the late Dr. F. E. Williams, Government Anthropologist. This article is based upon data furnished in Dr. Williams' published work,[1] supplemented by observations recorded by the author during a brief field period early in 1951 which was interrupted by the eruption of Mt. Lamington. My own observations refer to the Wasida or Jegase Sarahu tribe,[2] whereas some of Dr. Williams' information was gathered from the Aiga, Binandele and Tain Daware tribes, which are situated in other parts of the Division but nevertheless reveal a social organization practically identical with that of the Wasida people.

In investigating social control amongst the Orokaiva, three aspects will be examined which would seem to be important in any empirical study of social control. Firstly, there are the ideals people expect one another to try to live up to: the Orokaiva use the convenient term *otohu* to refer to these. Secondly, it is necessary to study education in conformity, which involves a consideration of Orokaiva childhood and an examination of the ritual of initiation from this point of view. Thirdly, there are the actual sanctions operating to encourage conformity with Orokaiva ideals. There will be an attempt, finally, to assess the effectiveness of this system.

(1) Orokaiva Ideals

The Orokaiva term *otohu* is perhaps midway between behaviour which is normally expected and that which is ideally desirable. This term is used in two senses: adjectivally, it indicates that the person so described is well-behaved in certain definite ways and, secondly, it signifies an honorific ornament worn by a large number of people. A man is *otohu* if he is generous and helpful, and is diligent in gardening and hunting[3]; also, the *otohu* man does not quarrel or brawl, he does not steal, nor does he commit adultery. A woman is *otohu* if she listens to her husband and does not speak to him angrily, if she is faithful to him and accompanies him wherever

[1] F. E. Williams, "Plant-Emblems Among the Orokaiva," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. LV, 1925; *Orokaiva Magic* (1928); *Orokaiva Society* (1930).

[2] Called the Jegaa-Saraa tribe by E. W. P. Chinnery and W. N. Beaver (*Papuan Annual Report* for 1914–15, pp. 158 ff.).

[3] *I.e.*, if he is able to vary the diet of his household occasionally with food from the bush, and if he works his garden regularly.